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Thursday, September 30, 1930

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Housekeepers' Chat

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

Subject: "Suggestions for Thrifty Homemakers." From Bureau of Home Economics, U.S.D.A.

Bulletin available: "Aunt Sammy's Radio Recipes."

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"Willful waste," they say, "makes woeful want." They also say that a woman can throw out more with a teaspoon, than a man can bring in with a shovel.

But that depends on the woman. The best housekeepers are economical managers, keeping in mind always the fact that what has been bought and paid for, should be used, and not wasted. I have a friend in the Bureau of Home Economics who is a marvel when it comes to making good use of the family income. The other day she gave me a list of suggestions, which are decidedly practical. Like to hear a few of them, you homemakers who ~~were~~ brides a few months ago?

First, take the matter of bread. Slices of bread tend to accumulate in the bread box. Before long there's a whole boxful of dry bread, if we aren't careful. Why not, says my friend, use a bread board and a sharp knife at the table, and cut off just what is needed? Of course, left-over slices of bread will occur, even with this effort to keep their number low.

The thrifty housewife can put these surplus slices of bread to a number of good uses. They can be toasted or oven-dried and eaten like toast, or rolled out for the bread-crumb jar; used for scalloped dishes, bread pudding, and stuffing.

Another point for economical housekeepers -- sharpen your paring knives, and peel fruits and vegetables as thinly as possible. To remove the skins from peaches, beets, and tomatoes, use the blanching and cold dipping process.

Why waste butter? Use individual bread and butter plates or butter saucers, to keep unused butter clean, and usable for cooking.

What shall we do with left-over cooked cereal? Put it into bread, muffins, or griddle cakes, in place of part of the flour and liquid.

Dry cake can be used as the basis of a fruit short cake, or an ice cream sandwich.

Do you have skim milk on hand? Skim milk is as valuable as whole milk, except for the butterfat and Vitamin A. Skim milk can be used to enrich soups, sauces, or puddings.

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Sour milk, of course, can always be made into cottage cheese. In your favorite cookbook -- no, I am not mentioning any cookbook, by name or by color -- in your favorite cookbook, as I said before, you can find ways to use sour milk, by consulting the recipes for biscuits, gingerbread, pancakes, muffins, and cakes.

If you know that the tail-ends of steak or chops will not be eaten, why not cut them off before serving, and save them for a stew, hash, meat balls, or another of these appetizing "left-over" dishes. "Cinderellas of the kitchen," they are sometimes called.

After cooking a roast, make a good deal of gravy. Many of the good meat extractives are in the roasting pan. Gravy not served at the table may be used later in a "shepherd's pie," to chicken croquettes, or to combine with vegetables, macaroni, or noodles.

Do you ever have left-over fish? Left-over fish may be creamed, scalloped, or made into fish chowder, when free of bones and skin.

Most fats can be used for frying, baking, or other cooking, when cleanly rendered. Separate the different kinds of fat, in covered labelled jars, and store in the refrigerator. Keep the fat in which fish has been fried entirely apart from the jars of chicken, beef, bacon, sausage, or ham fat which are useful for flavoring soups, gravies, or vegetables.

There -- that's a-plenty of trift suggestions for today.

Now let's turn our attention to another subject. Do you remember the letter I read you last week, from a mother who asked whether children should be paid for home duties? The question had come up in a Parent-Teachers meeting. The mother who wrote to me was inclined to think that her children should do certain home duties without thought of any monetary reward.

The first comment on the subject comes from Edith Dixon, a child specialist. We shall see what she says about it, under the head of "When to Pay a Child."

"Until a child is 14 or 15 years old," says Miss Dixon, "it is probably best that he should not earn money regularly. He needs first to become familiar with money as a purchasing power, and to develop a sense of values, through familiarity with many values. But, since it is only through earning money that he can gain any realization of the effort involved in obtaining it, and an understanding of the human cost of the things he uses every day, he should be allowed to earn extra amounts when opportunity offers."

Miss Dixon explains that there are four things which should be kept in mind, when paying a child for his services.

First, he should not be paid excessively. The reason for this is easy to see. Over-paying a child gives him a false notion of the amount of effort necessary to meet requirements. Over-paying also gives the child an exaggerated notion of the value of his services.

Second, a child should not be paid for everything he does. He should realize that he has certain obligations, as a member of the family group, for which he cannot be paid. What duties should he expect pay for? Those which occur occasionally; perhaps those tasks for which an outsider would have to be paid.

Third, when a job is done for pay, the doing of the work becomes optional — that is, the child may do it or not, as he likes.

Some parents complain that even though they offer to pay, the child refuses to do the work. This is the privilege of all free laborers. If the thing must be done, in any case, then it would be better not to offer to pay for it. If, however, the child undertakes a job for money, he should not be paid unless the job is completed.

It might be advisable to set a time limit for its completion, with an agreement that delay means only partial pay; failure to finish, no pay.

Fourth, the child should be paid only for those things which have commercial value. Being paid for an act of self-denial, of having a tooth pulled, gives a child a wrong conception of financial affairs. The natural reward for being good is not financial remuneration, but social approval. The good approval of family and friends is often, and should be, of more value to a child than money, concludes Miss. Dixon.

So now we have the viewpoint of another person on this interesting subject of when children should be paid. Thank you, Miss Dixon. Let's hear from others — mothers who pay for home duties, and mothers who do not. Which system works better?

Tomorrow — well, I believe I heard the Menu Specialist say she was working on a Stuffed Flank Steak this morning, and I'm sure I caught the fragrant odor of a Cranberry Pie when I passed the Recipe Lady's experimental kitchen. Some good pie recipes are in the famous cookbook with the green cover.

Tomorrow:— "Stuffed Flank Steak and Cranberry Pie."

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